

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) An article accommodating case having the shape of a generally rectangular solid which box that is open at the top, ~~characterized in that~~wherein

flanges that protrude outward are formed on the outside surfaces of the opening edges of the respective side walls,

~~and the respective coupling elements of dovetail projections and dovetail grooves of dovetail coupling means~~a dovetail coupling are formed respectively in the flanges of side walls that ~~face each other~~are opposed to one another, and

outer surfaces of the dovetail projections and surfaces of the dovetail grooves that are adapted to engage outer surfaces of cooperating dovetail projections are inclined with respect to a vertical axis of the case, so that engagement of the case with another identical case requires that the case be moved along a path of engagement that is inclined with respect to the vertical axis.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently amended) The article accommodating case according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein through-holes are formed in said flanges.

4. (Currently amended) The article accommodating case according to claim 3, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the through-holes formed in said flanges ~~also act as~~serve as water escape holes.

5. (Currently amended) The article accommodating case according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein legs are formed on ~~the four corners of the bottom~~four corners of a bottom wall of said case.

6. (Currently amended) The article accommodating case according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein

the respective side walls of said case are formed so that ~~these~~the side walls are inclined ~~to the inside in the downward direction~~with respect to the vertical axis such that the case is tapered,

inwardly protruding beads that protrude inward are formed on ~~the~~a pair of the side walls that face each other,

~~recessed parts of the cases of the upper tier demarcated on the outside surfaces of the side walls by said beads are engaged with protruding parts of the cases of the lower tier demarcated on the inside surfaces of the side walls by said beads when the cases are in a stacked state, so that the cases of the upper tier are accommodated inside the cases of the lower tier~~the beads form corresponding recesses on the outer surface of the case, and, in a first stacking position in which the case is a first case and an upper case of a stack of identical cases, the recesses are adapted to engage with the beads of a second case, which is identical to and nested with the first case, and

~~when cases of the upper tier are rotated 180 degrees in the horizontal plane and stacked on cases of the lower tier, the bottom walls of the legs of the cases of the upper tier are carried~~the first case is rotated by 180 degrees in a horizontal plane from the first stacking position to a second stacking position, bottom walls of legs of the first case are adapted to be carried on the upper walls of said beads of the cases of the lower tierthe beads of the second case.

7. (Currently amended) The article accommodating case according to claim 5, ~~characterized in that~~wherein water escape holes are formed in ~~the bottom wall of said case and/or~~
~~the~~a bottom wall of the case or bottom walls of the legs.

8. (New) The article accommodating case according to claim 1, wherein the case is prevented, by the inclination of the surfaces, from moving in the direction of the vertical axis with respect to the other identical case when at least one of the dovetail projections is engaged with a dovetail groove of the other identical case or when at least one of the dovetail grooves is engaged with a dovetail projection of the other identical case.

9. (New) The article accommodating case according to claim 1, wherein the dovetail grooves and the dovetail projections have center axes that are aligned with the path of engagement, and the center axes of the dovetail grooves and the dovetail projections are inclined with respect to the vertical axis.

10. (New) An article accommodating case having a box-like shape with an open top,
wherein

the case has a central axis, which is perpendicular to a bottom wall of the case,

the case has four walls, which include two end walls, which are opposite to one another,
and two side walls, which are opposite to one another,

outwardly protruding flanges are formed on outside surfaces of upper edges of the four walls,

a dovetail projection is formed on the flange of one of the end walls and one of the side walls, and a dovetail groove is formed on the flange of the other of the end walls and the other of the side walls, wherein the dovetail grooves and the dovetail projections are adapted to engage dovetail projections and dovetail grooves, respectively, of a another, identical, article accommodating case, and

outer surfaces of the dovetail projections and surfaces of the dovetail grooves that are adapted to engage outer surfaces of cooperating dovetail projections are inclined with respect to a central axis of the case, so that engagement of the case with the other identical case requires that the case be moved along a path of engagement that is inclined with respect to the central axis.

11. (New) The article accommodating case according to claim 10, wherein through-holes are formed in said flanges.

12. (New) The article accommodating case according to claim 11, wherein the through-holes formed in said flanges are water escape holes.

13. (New) The article accommodating case according to claim 10, wherein legs are formed in four corners of the bottom wall.

14. (New) The article accommodating case according to claim 13, wherein water escape holes are formed in the bottom wall of said case or in bottom walls of the legs.

15. (New) The article accommodating case according to claim 10, wherein the walls of said case are inclined with respect to the central axis such that the case is tapered, inwardly protruding beads are formed on the side walls, recesses are formed in the outer surface of the case in correspondence with the beads, and, in a first stacking position in which the case is a first case and an upper case of a stack of identical cases, the recesses are adapted to engage with the beads of a second case, which is identical to and nested with the first case, and when the first case is rotated by 180 degrees in a horizontal plane from the first stacking position to a second stacking position, bottom walls of legs of the first case are adapted to be carried on upper walls of the beads of the second case.

16. (New) The article accommodating case according to claim 10, wherein the case is prevented, by the inclination of the surfaces, from moving in the direction of the central axis with respect to another identical case when at least one of the dovetail projections is engaged with a dovetail groove of the other identical case or when at least one of the dovetail grooves is engaged with a dovetail projection of the other identical case.

17. (New) The article accommodating case according to claim 10, wherein the dovetail grooves and the dovetail projections have center axes that are aligned with the path of engagement, and the center axes of the dovetail grooves and the dovetail projections are inclined with respect to the center axis of the case.